

network;

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monitoring an elapsed period of time while attempting to forward the packet stored in the memory to the network; and

determining whether to cancel attempts to forward the packet stored in the memory to the network when the elapsed period, of time exceeds the time limit.

Claim 2 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of canceling attempts to forward the packet stored in the memory when that packet is not currently being transmitted over the network.

Claim 3 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of allowing transmission of the packet stored in the memory to complete when that packet is currently being transmitted over the network.

Claim 4 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of interrupting transmission of the packet stored in the memory when that packet is currently being transmitted over the network.

Claim 5 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of resetting a timer to allow additional attempts to forward the packet stored in the memory when that packet is not currently being transmitted over the network.

Claim 6 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of replacing the packet stored in the memory with a new packet having the same data as the replaced packet when it is determined to cancel the forwarding of the stored packet.

Claim 7 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of replacing the packet stored in memory with a new packet having different data than the replaced packet when it is determined to cancel the forwarding of the stored packet.

Claim 8 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the packet stored in memory includes time-sensitive data and protocol-related data, and the new packet has the same time-sensitive data and different protocol-related data as the replaced packet.

Claim 9 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising the steps of:

resetting a back-off level; and
attempting to forward the new packet to the network.

Claim 10 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

10. The method of claim 8 further comprising the steps of:

initiating attempts to transmit the new packet to the network; and
resetting the elapsed period of time.

Claim 11 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

11. The method of claim 8 wherein the packet stored in memory includes time-sensitive data and the step of replacing the packet stored in memory with a new packet can occur a predetermined maximum number of times.

Claim 12 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

12. The method of claim 7 wherein the packet stored in memory includes time-sensitive data and protocol-related data, and the new packet has different time-sensitive data and the same protocol-related data as the replaced packet.

Claim 13 has not been changed by this amendment and remains as follows.

13. The method of Claim 1 wherein the steps of monitoring, establishing the time limit, and determining whether to cancel forwarding the packet stored in memory occur only when